

## Message Text

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13

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 DRC-01 AF-10 /125 W  
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R 011620Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3472

INFO AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, NL, PO

SUBJECT: INITIAL DUTCH REACTION TO EVENTS IN PORTUGAL

1. SUMMARY: GON HAS TAKEN CAUTIOUS BUT GENERALLY OPTIMISTIC LINE ON SPINOLA COUP WHICH HAS ATTENUATED STRONG LEFT WING PRESSURE FOR IMMEDIATE RECOGNITION GUINEA-BISSAU. END SUMMARY.

2. DUTCH REACTION TO RECENT EVENTS IN PORTUGAL HAS BEEN CAUTIOUS BUT SOMEWHAT OPTIMISTIC. SPEAKING TO PRESS AFTER CABINET MEETING APRIL 26, PRIME MINISTER DEN UYL CHARACTERIZED SPINOLA COUP AS "EXTREMELY IMPORTANT" REPRESENTING "MORE THAN TECHNICAL CHANGE OF POWER." HE EXPRESSED HOPE COUP WOULD LEAD TO RESTORATION OF  
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DEMOCRACY IN PORTUGAL AND LIBERATION OF PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES

IN AFRICA. NOTING SITUATION IN PORTUGAL STILL SOMEWHAT UNCLEAR, PM SAW HOPEFUL INDICATIONS IN SPINOLA STATEMENTS ON RESTORATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL FREEDOMS, NEW ELECTIONS, RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS, ETC. PM COMMENTED THAT IF ALL SPINOLA'S PROMISES REALIZED "SOMETHING IS HAPPENING WHICH MAY BE OF GREAT SIGNIFICANCE." ON OTHER SIDE OF COIN, HOWEVER, PM FOUND GENERAL SPINOLA "CONSERVATIVE MAN" AND POWER IN HANDS OF MILITARY GROUP. HE ALSO NOTED SPINOLA'S DECLARATION THAT PORTUGAL WOULD REMAIN MULTI-CONTINENT NATION, ARGUING THIS CALLED FOR CAUTION. PM CONCLUDED THAT "RESERVED JUDGEMENT WAS NECESSARY" BUT "RESERVE WITH CLEARLY POSITIVE ELEMENTS." DEN UYL TOLD REPORTERS "DEEPLY ROOTED DISSATISFACTION" WAR HAD CAUSED IN PORTUGAL PLAYED IMPORTANT ROLE IN COUP. PM EXPRESSED HOPE TALKS BETWEEN PORTUGAL AND LIBERATION MOVEMENTS WOULD BEGIN SHORTLY.

3. FONMIN VAN DER STOEL, WHO HAD CLOSELY FOLLOWED EVENTS IN PORTUGAL DURING HIS VISIT TO SOVIET UNION, TOLD PRESS APRIL 28 SITUATION WAS STILL UNCLEAR. GON CONTINUES TO FAVOR "EXTERNAL SELF-DETERMINATION" FOR PORTUGUESE AFRICAN TERRITORIES RATHER THAN MERELY "INTERNAL SELF-DETERMINATION." COMMENTING ON GENERAL SPINOLA'S DISCUSSION OF FEDERATION, FOREIGN MINISTER QUESTIONED WHETHER INTERNAL AUTONOMY WOULD BE ANALOGOUS TO POST WW II DUTCH-INDONESIAN UNION. HE SAID THAT IN COMING WEEKS GON WOULD HAVE TO SEE EXACTLY WHAT NEW GOVERNMENT IN LISBON HAD IN MIND. FONMIN ADDED IT WOULD BE A HOPEFUL DEVELOPMENT IF GENERAL SPINOLA WORKED TOWARD TRUE DEMOCRACY IN PORTUGAL INCLUDING FREE ELECTIONS AND GIVING UP COLONIAL REALM. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, VAN DER STOEL SAID NINE WOULD HAVE TO RE-EXAMINE WHETHER PORTUGAL COULD BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE EC. ADDRESSING SPECIFIC QUESTION OF GUINEA-BISSAU RECOGNITION, FONMIN NOTED COUP MADE IT MORE NECESSARY THAN EVER TO CONSULT WITH THE EC AND NORDIC COUNTRIES ABOUT WHAT COULD BE DONE. HE REITERATED THAT ISOLATED DUTCH DECISION TO RECOGNIZE GUINEA-BISSAU WAS UNDESIRABLE.

4. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE MINISTER JAN PRONK TOLD PRESS APRIL 26 THAT IF COUP IN PORTUGAL PROVED TO BE REALLY SUCCESSFUL IT WAS ONE OF YEAR'S MOST IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS. PRONK, WHO WAS RETURNING FROM SPECIAL GA IN NEW YORK, SAID COUP HAD RESULTED IN CLEAR SENSE OF RELIEF AT THE UN. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE MINISTER SAID THAT IF THE COUP REALLY LEADS TO THE DECOLONIZATION OF PORTUGUESE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AFRICA A "HEAVY MORTGAGE WILL BE LIFTED FROM THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE RICH NATIONS WITHIN THE UN." SECOND CHAMBER FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN DANKERT WAS MORE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE COUP, NOTING THAT IT WAS PRIMARILY A MILITARY COUP AND THAT THE MILITARY WERE NOT NOTED FOR THEIR PROGRESSIVE TENDENCIES.

5. PORTUGUESE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION IN DUTCH PRESS. EDITORIAL COMMENT IS GENERALLY CAUTIOUS WITH HOPE

EXPRESSED GENERAL SPINOLA AND HIS COLLEAGUES CAN SOMEHOW EXTRICATE PORTUGAL FROM AFRICA WITHOUT TEARING THE NATION APART. ON MAY 1 LABOR PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE CABLED MARIO SOARES CONGRATULATING HIM ON HIS RETURN TO PORTUGAL AND URGED HIM TO STRIVE FOR FULL SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE FOR PORTUGUESE COLONIES IN AFRICA.

6. COMMENT: COUP IN PORTUGAL AND ATTENDANT UNCERTAINTY ON DIRECTION IN WHICH SPINOLA PLANS TAKE PORTUGAL IN SOUTHERN AFRICA HAS BEEN GODSEND FOR GON AND LABOR PARTY GOVERNMENTAL LEADERSHIP IN PARTICULAR. GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN UNDER CONTINUING LEFT WING PRESSURE TO RECOGNIZE GUINEA-BISSAU. PRIME MINISTER ANGERED HIS PARTY COLLEAGUES WEEK AGO WHEN HE TOLD POLITICAL MEETING UNILATERAL DUTCH RECOGNITION WOULD BE UNWISE. THIS VIEW REPUDIATED BY LABOR PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE FEW DAYS LATER. GIVEN UNCERTAINTY AND TURMOIL IN PORTUGAL, GOVERNMENT CAN ARGUE QUITE CONVINCINGLY THAT UNILATERAL DUTCH ACTION ON GUINEA-BISSAU RECOGNITION AT THIS TIME WOULD BE MOST IMPRUDENT.

7. GON'S "CONTINUATION" OF RELATIONS WITH PORTUGAL BEING REPORTED SEPTEL.

TANGUY

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